



COMMUNITY POLICING FORUM

GUN CONTROL



WHAT IS A COMMUNITY POLICING FORUM?

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY POLICE FORUM?

- A Community Policing Forum or a Community Police Forum (CPF) is a legal community structure that:
 - Ensures effective communication and partnership between the police and communities.
 - Allows the community to voice its concerns and needs with regards to policing and other relevant safety issues.
 - Ensures that the South African Police Service (SAPS) remains accountable to the community.
- Members of each CPF are elected during formal election processes. The CPF gets its mandate from the community, which informs its legal powers and functions.
- Each CPF and board is allowed to determine its own procedure, but *The Police Services Act* requires that minutes are kept of its proceedings.

Source: What is a Community Policing Forum?

WHY ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY POLICE FORUM?

There are many good reasons to establish a CPF, including to:

- Help the police and the local community work together
- Make the police and the community partners against crime
- Identify and solve problems to do with crime, public disorder, fear and poor service by the police
- Improve communication and relations between the police and the community
- Find ways to make the police service transparent and accountable to the community
- Encourage the media to be fair when they tell people about police actions
- Promote respect for human rights
- Work together with other institutions in the local community
- Monitor the police service, including complaints, charges, visits to cells and patrolling

Source: Community Police Forum Toolkit

HOW IS A COMMUNITY POLICE FORUM ESTABLISHED?

- The police station commander is responsible for setting up a CPF at their station, but because it is a joint effort, they need help from the community.
- The first step is to get people together by organising a public meeting and setting up a steering committee.
- The steering committee prepares for the launch of the

CPF by writing a draft constitution and finding out how the community wants the Forum to work.

- At the launch, the CPF adopts an official CPF constitution and elects an executive committee to replace the steering committee.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY POLICE FORUMS?

- The short answer is anybody who has an interest in uplifting and protecting their community.
- When setting up a CPF, the station commander should target powerful organisations, institutions and community leaders. Local councillors, NGO and welfare organisations, churches, business and farming representatives, hospital staff, local chiefs and indunas, security companies, local press members, police reservists and volunteers are all potentially valuable voices in CPFs.
- CPFs are for everybody living in an area. Anybody who has ideas about how to fight crime or who has noticed criminal trends should attend so that the police are fully informed.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNITY POLICE FORUMS?

- Community policing teaches citizens to take a stand against crime.
- CPFs give communities a chance to take control of crime in their neighbourhoods and to do something about it.
- The adoption of a CPF in communities has generally led to a turnaround in the community's crime situation and it also usually changes the way that the SAPS addresses crime.
- CPFs and local government can also work together. This is how:
 - identify flashpoints, crime patterns and anti-crime priorities and communicate these to the SAPS;
 - jointly set crime prevention priorities and agree on strategies; and
 - mobilise community-based campaigns, activities and the resources to sustain them.

HOW IS A COMMUNITY POLICE FORUM RUN?

- A CPF is like an organisation and needs a certain amount of work. Somebody must organise meetings and inform members of the community about when and where they will be held.
- Meetings form the backbone of the CPF, so it is important to ensure that there is a common goal and the ability to resolve conflict.
- The executive committee takes charge of the day-to-day running of the CPF, and can form sub-forums to attend to any particular problems and promote community policing projects in the area. They also elect suitable persons to take on the roles of chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary and treasurer.

The Chairperson

The chairperson should not be a member of the SAPS and is the person who chairs meetings and gives feedback on the activities of the CPF. They also sit in on police management meetings when invited by the station commander. The chairperson needs to be someone with excellent leadership skills.

Deputy Chairperson

The deputy chairperson must also be a member of the community and must stand in for the chairperson if they are absent.

The Secretary

It is preferable for the secretary to be a member of the SAPS. The secretary arranges meetings, takes minutes and manages the CPF's correspondence and official documents (except for financial records).

The Treasurer

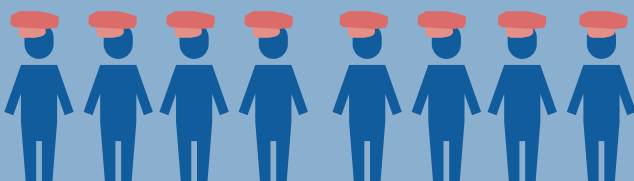
The treasurer can be a member of the SAPS or the community and handles the finances of the CPF. The treasurer operates a bank account for the CPF and should be reliable and systematic with money.

Source: Gun Free South Africa

DID YOU KNOW?

Some of the elements of community policing include:

MORE PEACE THAN POLICE. IN COMMUNITY POLICING, POLICE OFFICERS ARE PEACE OFFICERS. THEY STILL MAKE SURE PEOPLE OBEY THE LAW, BUT THEY ALSO HELP TO PREVENT CRIME AND END CONFLICT.



MORE PROACTIVE THAN REACTIVE. COMMUNITY POLICING TEACHES US NOT TO SIT AND WAIT FOR CRIMES TO HAPPEN BEFORE WE DO SOMETHING. INSTEAD, WE FIND OUT WHY PEOPLE COMMIT CRIME IN THE FIRST PLACE. THEN WE WORK TOGETHER TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS THAT CAUSE CRIME.



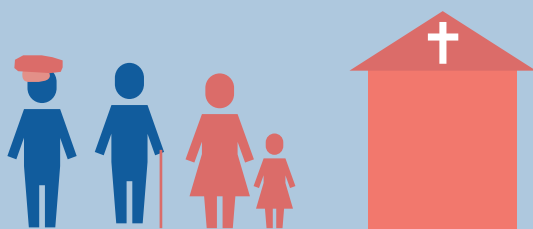
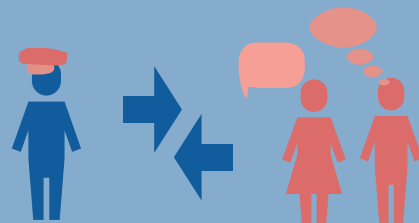
MORE CREATIVE THAN RULE-BOUND. WE MUST BE CREATIVE AND THINK OF NEW SOLUTIONS TO OLD PROBLEMS. WE CANNOT ALWAYS PREVENT CRIME BY MAKING MORE POLICE OFFICERS PATROL OUR STREETS. SOMETIMES THERE ARE BETTER SOLUTIONS THAT LAST LONGER.



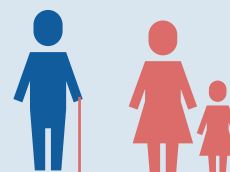
VALUING COMMUNITY MEMBERS. THE POLICE CANNOT MAKE AN AREA SAFE IF THE COMMUNITY DOES NOT HELP THEM. THE COMMUNITY OFTEN HAS IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT CRIME, SO WE CAN ASK THEM TO GIVE THIS INFORMATION TO THE POLICE (OR TO COMMUNITY POLICE FORUM MEMBERS) TO HELP MAKE THEIR COMMUNITIES A SAFER PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK IN.

JOINING HANDS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME. IF WE WANT A SAFE COMMUNITY, WE NEED AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE TO WORK TOGETHER. THE CITIZENS, COMMUNITY LEADERS, BUSINESS OWNERS, SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, POLICE, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS, SERVICE PROVIDERS AND THE COURTS MUST BECOME EQUAL PARTNERS AGAINST CRIME. EVERYONE MUST JOIN HANDS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY.

EVERYBODY'S VOICE IS IMPORTANT. ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND ALL POLICE PERSONNEL MAY TAKE PART IN DECISIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME.



PUTTING VULNERABLE GROUPS FIRST. COMMUNITY POLICING LOOKS FOR SPECIAL WAYS TO PROTECT VULNERABLE GROUPS SUCH AS CHILDREN, WOMEN, THE ELDERLY AND THE DISABLED. WE MUST TEACH VULNERABLE GROUPS HOW THEY CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR OWN SAFETY.



MYTHBUSTERS**MYTH**

Community Police Forum (CPF) members have the power to arrest.

FACT

CPF members are the eyes and ears of the community and are an incredible help to police. However, CPF members do not hold any additional powers within the law. While a police officer has wide powers to make an arrest without a warrant, you, as a private individual, or member of a CPF, may only arrest a person who commits or attempts to commit a crime in your presence, or whom you reasonably suspect of having committed an offence specified in Schedule 1 of the Criminal Procedure Act.

The CPF is a free security service.

The CPF works with the SAPS in a structured manner. The CPF is not responsible for the safety of the community. All residents/community members are responsible for themselves and must have the basic safety measures in place.

The CPF is supported financially by the government.

The CPF is a non-profitable forum and does not receive financial support from the government.

CPF members and committee members are paid for their services and expenses.

CPF work is voluntarily and no one gets paid.

I am allowed to call-up or wake my CPF chairperson at night when my neighbour is noisy.

You should build a relationship with your neighbour and discuss these kinds of matters with him/her yourself.

I do not have to report small crimes like trespassing.

It is important that you do report all crime, no matter how small it seems (e.g. trespassers might be linked to other crimes). If the crime statistics are low, police officers are withdrawn from the area and sent to communities where the crime statistics are higher.

When I go to work, I can leave my gate and doors open, as the CPF will patrol the neighbourhood and watch my property.

CPF members are working community members and spend their days earning their daily bread.

RESOURCES

- **The *Community Police Forum Toolkit* is a useful guide to help you set up a CPF in your community.**
- **The formation and functioning of Community Police Forums is governed by a number of policies – many of which have been amended over time, the most directly relevant are:**
 - The South African Police Service Act (number 68) of 1995: Chapter 7 of the Act deals with Community Police Forums and Boards.
 - Community Safety Forums Policy, 2011.
 - White Paper on Policing, 2016: The Policing White Paper.

DIFFERENT WAYS TO TALK ABOUT COMMUNITY POLICE FORUMS

These questions can help guide your radio shows and outreach.

They are angles to the bigger topic of community policing forums.

You have many examples of how to develop your outreaches and radio shows from previous guides. Use them to expand on some of the angles below.



Do we need community policing to make our communities safe?



In what ways can a Community Police Forum effectively deal with the serious crime problems in our community?



In what ways can community members contribute to the success of Community Police Forums?